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The style of the volume is not as light and easy as it should be for popular use. Many of the sentences are involved so that one frequently has to go back and reread them before one grasps the meaning. This may be due in part to the large amount of detail contained. The reader at times when expecting a clear-cut conclusion is also disappointed in the caution of the author. Especially is this true where blame is in question as in the bank or internal improvements management.

The state is to be congratulated on the excellence of the work of Mr. Pease. The thanks of the people of the whole northwest are due the author for the long, tedious, dishwashing work necessary in the preparation of such a volume.

LOGAN ESAREY

*The era of the civil war, 1848-1870.* By Arthur Charles Cole, University of Illinois. [Centennial history of Illinois, volume III] (Springfield: Illinois centennial commission, 1919. 499 p. \$2.00)

There has been no more notable undertaking in the field of state history than the *Centennial history of Illinois*. Preceded by elaborate efforts to gather materials from archives both at home and abroad, and engaging the serious and prolonged efforts of a group of young scholars who are conversant with the approved methods of contemporary historical science, this effort at comprehensive state history bears sharp contrast to the amateur or catch-penny volumes which have so often passed as histories. These volumes conform also to modern professional canons in the matter of footnotes, bibliographies, and indexes, and withal are most attractive examples of the arts of the printer and binder.

In the third volume of the series, Mr. Cole presents the results of his study of the years 1848-1870 — years of most rapid change, since they carried the state from the frontier stage to that of a modern commonwealth. Approximately half of the pages are claimed by the story of the Kansas-Nebraska struggle, the civil war, and the early stages of reconstruction. The other moiety is devoted to various phases of *Kulturgeschichte* — railroad building, banking, agricultural progress, immigration and emigration, religion and education, the rise of capitalism and the labor movement. The book is plain, narrative history, with little attempt at interpretation, and with no emphasis upon analysis of institutions. One expects to meet much that is familiar in a review of the Kansas-Nebraska act, the origin of the republican party, the Lincoln-Douglas debates, the elections of 1860 and 1864, but Mr. Cole's research in newspaper files and unprinted manuscripts has been so extensive that these chapters have much of the value of monographs on the Illinois aspects of these subjects. The great preponderance of source citations

in the footnotes indicates but slight indebtedness to the considerable number of monographs listed in the bibliography. The imposing mass of information contained in the chapters on social and economic history somewhat overcrowds the available space, and imparts a gazetteer-like quality. The author's literary style suffers also under the effort to compress so much into small space, and monotony replaces the art which subordinates detail and brings the large fact into clear relief. There are traces of carelessness at times, as shown by the redundant phrase "prevailing practices of the day" (p. 49), and the expression "won out" (p. 267). Is it by intent that "christian" is decapitalized on page 222 and elsewhere (although not everywhere)? Slips of the pen or type are few: "trans-Atlantic" appears for "transcontinental" (p. 361), "partiotism" for "patriotism" (p. 271), and the legend on the chart at page 178 reads "less than 5%" where "50-55%" is clearly intended. The writer's style appears to good advantage in the longer narrative portions, and at times produces very effective sentences, as in the description of the American party as furnishing "an opportunity for a dark lantern exodus from old party bondage."

One leaves off reading this scholarly volume with a new sense of the difficulty of writing state history. For the historian, as for the statesman, state boundaries are largely artificial. Nearly all matters of large historical consequence in American history are national, or at least sectional, in their scope, and state history is condemned either to treat of the trivial, or to serve as the channel through which local currents may flow into the bosom of the main stream. To write of Illinois in the period of Douglas, and Lincoln, and Grant, and Trumbull — to write of Illinois at a time when one of her citizens was war president and another the field chief of the army — is not to write state history, but national history.

In dealing with topics of less commanding importance there is great danger of losing true perspective. The history of banking and of educational legislation in Illinois, for example, is closely parallel to their history in other states of the northwest, and any adequate treatment of such matters must be at least sectional. Intensive studies within state lines have value chiefly as contributions toward the larger synthesis. The effort at comprehensive state history hardly allows for either of these facts. Even the trained historian will sometimes be misled through the narrowing of the horizon due to the artificial limitations incident to the writing of state history. Is not this the case when Mr. Cole claims an Illinois origin for the Morrill land-grant law for agricultural colleges? Important as may have been the influence of Jonathan B. Turner, other

factors, long at work, contributed to the final result. Eastern states were the scene of considerable activity on behalf of federal aid to agricultural education; indeed, the decline of agriculture in the old states under stress of the competition with the rich, cheap lands of the west imparted much of the impetus to the movement for federal aid, and the votes on the bill showed a sectional alignment, the west opposing and the east favoring the measure.

A curious feature of this volume is the lack of characterization of the *dramatis personae*. Scores of persons who doubtless were men of real flesh and blood, and did their bit in the making of the state, are introduced by name and office, but *exeunt* forthwith never to reappear. Truly, elaborate portraits of these men of secondary note would seem incongruous in association with men whose greatness dispenses with the need of portraiture. Is the author, conscious of the uselessness of characterizing the giants of national stature, embarrassed into silence concerning the men of merely state proportions?

On the whole, one is inclined to attribute such weaknesses as the book may possess largely to the difficulty of the rôle of state historian, and to reaffirm the opinion that the volume, along with the rest of the series, establishes a new standard of effort and excellence in the field of comprehensive state history.

HOMER C. HOCKETT

*Starved Rock state park and its environs.* By Carl O. Sauer, Gilbert H. Cady, and Henry C. Cowles. [Geographic society of Chicago, bulletin no. 6] (Chicago: University of Chicago press, 1918. 148 p. \$2.00 net)

That Starved Rock state park offers an interesting laboratory to students of geology, botany, and history, and that it is visited each year by some 75,000 persons are adequate reasons for the preparation of this volume. Such an authoritative study of the region has long been needed as a corrective to the erroneous views heretofore presented in numerous booklets and pamphlets. Each of the writers, Mr. Sauer on geography, Mr. Cady on geology, and Mr. Cowles on botany, has given much time to a scientific survey of the special field which he presents. The historical sketch is equally satisfactory for it is based on such authorities as Margry, Joutel, Charlevoix, Tonti, the Jesuit relations, and Parkman. The sketches and reproductions of photographs constitute an excellent supplement to the text. Those secured by Mr. Frank M. Woodruff of the Chicago academy of sciences are particularly notable. It is to be regretted, however, that the authors, who must all be familiar with the names used on the map prepared by the Illinois state geological survey